Hanging the Stockings.

Three little worsted stockings all in a row, And I have patched two scarlet heels, and darned a crimson toe. Over the eyes of azure, over the eyes of brow, It seemed as though the eyelids could never be coaxed fast down.

I sang for a good long hour before they were shut quite tight; For to-morrow will be Christmas, and St. Nick comes to-night.
We laughed as we dropped the candles into heel and toe,
For not one little stocking was missing from

But O, the empty cradles-the tears that pillows wer.
The voice of Rachel crying—my soul cannot forget:
For there is no child to-night, in many a house I know,
Where a little sock was hanging only a year

And when our work was ended, we stood a lit-tle apart,
Silently praying the Father to soothe that
mother's heart
Who looks on her unworn stockings amid her
failing tears,
Whose darling is keeping Christmas in Christ's
eternal years,

The Old Virginia Christmas.

Apple eider, 'simmon beer. Christmas comes but once a year." And I have always felt thankful that it does not come any oftener; rare things are generally valued. Why, if diamonds were as common as dewdrops in May, or pearls as frequently seen as the first jewels of December, people would say, "lovely but valueless." And if Christmas came two or three times a year it would soon lose its popularity and be held a thing of no account. As it is, how brightly do we anticipate its coming; how eagerly is it welcomed, and with what reluctance do we see it depart! And if Christmas is now "a joy forever," what must it have been in the ine old "days of yore?" Only those who have passed a Christmas at a Virginia mansion, can realize its pleasures. Its joys begin with Christmas Eve, when the scattered members of the family and a few chosen guests begin to gather in. Carriage after carriage rolls up to the broad steps, and merry, hap-py faces are collecting in the cosy siting room. Tumult rules the hour, for everybody is glad to see everybody else, and each one has a thousand things to say. But after supper they quiet down, and begin to enjoy rational conversa-tion. The little ones hang their stockings up and want to sit up half the night talking about Santa Claus. At an early hour the "good nights" are spoken and all go to sleep, "so as to feel refreshed to-morrow." To-morrow begins at an early hour, for before cockgrow the servants come in to kindle the fire, each eager to be the first to claim "Christmas gif' of the "white folks."
The children also rise early, to seek in
the toes of their stockings the hidden
treasures that have filled their dreams. The lazy elders slumber on, or try to slumber on, for the children and darkies are too hilarious to admit of undisturbed slumbers. About nine comes the smoking breakfast, the table drawn up to the wide old fire-place, blazing with lickory logs. The little ones, still busy with Santa's presents, are grouped on the rug, discussing and comparing their stores. The grown people take their places at the table; the gray-haired father returns thanks for "all these blessings," each one devoutly bending the head the while, and the children hushing their chatter, whispering, "grandpa is saying grace." After this the plates are turned and many exelamations of pleasure are heard as one after another finds some pretty present under his or her plate. These must all be examined, and breakfast is forgotten until the father says: "Come, girls, breakfast is getting cold. You can look at your presents after breakfast." The mother pours the amber coffee, clear as wine, and all begin to discuss the good things that Dinah has sent in from her savory kingdom, the kitchen. Breakfast over, the ladies begin to dispense useful presents to the servants, aprons, handkerchiefs, woolen gloves, stockings and socks, sacks and dresses for their children, etc. Chloe comes in, radiant in a crimson bandana turban,

pickles, catsup, etc. For desert, Joe, the butler, brings in the Christmas plum-pudding; mince pies, and custards and goblets of cool yellow cream. After the lamps are lit "old Jim" the banjo player, is sent for from the quarters and dancing begins, reels, quadrilles and cotillions, with now and then a spirited waltz. The servants gather about the parlor windows "to peep, and the dancers catch occasional glimpses of dusky faces peering in at them.

Presently a servant enters bearing a tray filled with glasses. Another follows with a huge bowl of foaming golden egg nogg and a silver punch ladle to dip it. Everybody drinks this luscious beverage and Christmas would cease to be Christmas without it. In the "wee mes' hours of morning" they senarate sma' hours of morning" they separate to sleep until the 10 o'clock breakfast. This programme is repeated the next day and is kept up for a week.

new cotton dress and an immense shiny,

many colored necklace (a present from

young Joe, the dining-room servant) to

wash the breakfast things. The house

is put into beautiful order, and after

awhile the guests invited to partake of

the Christmas dinner, begin to arrive.

The pleasant day passes quickly. The older people are in the sitting-room,

quietly enjoying themselves; the parlor is given up to the young folks, and whenever the door is opened gay sounds of song, merry chatter and bursts of laughter issue into the hall. About 5

o'clock the sumptuous dinner is ready.

I can see the table now, groaning be-

neath its load. The place of honor is occupied by the lordly turkey, stuffed with oysters, and accompanied by its celery sauce. At the other end of the

table is a huge roast of beef, with mash-

ed potatoes. The intervening space is filled with such minor things as chick-

ens, game, rice, macaroni, sausage,

"Merry Christmas, mother!" cheer-fully exclaimed little Charlie Miggs, as he bounded into his parent's presence with a face beaming like a new brass with a face beaming like a new brass kettle. "O, don't merry Christmas me!" growled the old lady. "Yesterday afternoon there were six mince-pies upon the top shelf of the pantry. This morning there are only five. Now, where is that other pie?" "Mother," solemnly answered the boy. "as true as I live, I don't know, but brother Bill has been rolling round the bed all night, sick enough to die."—Brooklyn Eagle.

The Closing Year.

Faster than petals fall on windy days From ruined roses, Hope after hope falls fluttering, and decays, Ere the year closes.

For little hopes, that open but to die, And little pleasures, Divide the long, sad year, that labors by, Into short measures.

Yes, let them go! our day lived hopes are not The life we cherish; Love lives, till dl appointments are forgot And sorrows perish.

On withered boughs, where still the old leaf clings, New leaves come never; And in the heart, where hope hangs laded, springs No new endeavor.

HOW TO MAKE HOLIDAY PRE'ENTS.

Hints of Inexpensive Presents, How to Make and Where to Get Them—A W typer About Garters, Stockings and Corsets.

While the holidays are joyous for the men and joily for the children they are fraught with anxiety for the women, who not only must anticipate the gas-tronomic wants of the household, but manufacture and invent something for everybody, regardless of age or sex. The larger her connection the greater her responsibility, and long before the big cousin with the little mustache and the new baby nephew have been thought of poor mother is on the verge of dis-traction. While it is a delightful essential that all should be remembered, it is by no means imperative that the favors should tax the purse. And for the bene-fit of those with whom economy is an urgency the following suggestions are

One of the most effective and inexpensive waste baskets can be devised for less than 50 cents. Get a stout peach basket from your grocer and cover it in-side and outside with any material that is handy. If intended for a room much used, cover it again with some blue paper cambric, stretched on plain. Get two yards of dotted muslin and have the inner side put on in gathers and the outer drapery laid in a loose plaiting. Cover the connection around the brim with a ruching of blue satin ribbon. which can be purchased any place for 12 cents a yard. This design is exceed-ing pretty if the outside is covered with silk cut in little gores to fit the basket. Have Swiss tarletan or mull lining, and tinish off with a band made of piece feathers, such as duck, quail, or peacock. These baskets are frequently seen in handsomely furnished libraries, sit-ting-rooms, and chambers for waste paper or a catch-all for the threads and tooth-picks that are constantly appear-ing on the carpets. For a different style of parlor receptacle get a common pasteboard box, such as shirts are sold in, and after removing the edges roll the cover in the form of a cylinder, lacing the edges together with a piece of cable cord. Cut out a circular piece for the bottom and sew it in with the cord. Line the entire inside and the outside of the base with some dark serge or cashmere. Get a piece of coarse canvas, work in a cross-stitch and border pattern having different but harmonious colors for every stripe. Use double zephyr as that is the best for entirely covering the lines of the canvas. It will be well to select black or dark wine color for the back-ground as the dusting and sweeping will tell on light worsteds. Fit this over the box and finish the upper and lower edge with a heavy black silk cord. If desired for a little scrap-bag put a loop of the cord on one side and hang in the

corner near the machine For a housewife there are few offerings from a friend that will be more acceptable than a sewing-apron. Use grass linen, duck, or some similar stout goods, being careful to select a gray or durable brown. You can buy a paper pattern for 15e with full directions for making and trimming. For the same tireless worker two or three dainty dust-caps will be appreciated. Cut the paper mus-lin, which should not be of a light color, circular, about twelve inches in diameter, and get the edge pinked. Run a narrow casing two inches from the edge and gather with a flat elastic.

A dozen kitchen aprons made of brown gingham, with bib and button, will cost \$3, and where is the housewife that will not enthuse? Equally useful is a couple of holders, wadded, quilted and bound with a good sized loop at one corner, so as to secure it for ironing day. We have seen a sample of this kind of work. The possessor received it on her wedding day, and the carefully applied patches and the darns upon darns was sufficient evidence that it had been appreciated.

No bath-room is complete in its appointments until there is a bracket with a pair of toilet gloves on it. These are knitted or crocheted with white ever-lasting braid, in mitten shape, large chough to cover a man's hand. They eost nothing but the time spent in making them, and any seven-year-old girl, or boy either, for that matter, can be shown how to make them. If the friendship is sufficiently intimate use the same material and two knitting needles making a little square or a rectangular piece of work for washrags. A collar or handkerchief bag to hang near the toilet table is a less suggestive gift and a handy one, too. It can be made of graduated pieces in tidy-cotton, crocheted in the afghan stitch, decorated, and sewed together with searlet worsted; or a cheaper and equally serviceable method is to erochet an open work bag to a piece of silver cardboard about six inches deep, with a circumference to suit the taste. One seen last week had been manufactured from a pair of father's old duck pantaloons. The bag, which was used for holding pieces of soiled laces, meas-ured some twelve inches in depth, and the side gores were bound together with searlet braid.

An after-dinner apron for a lady can An after-dinner aprol for a may can be fashioned from any kind of fine cot-ton goods ruffled with deep embroidery. But these worn with a handsome toilet, when the lady whiles away the time with some fancy-work, are made of fine behinds beautiful darged with floss or bobinet heavily darned with floss or linen thread. The ruffle is made of the self same material and a large satin bow to correspond with the band takes the place of a pocket. This little gift con-sumes a vast amount of time but it is "a thing of beauty, etc." when done.

If devising presents for several ladies, and there is no objection to duplicates, procure three or four yards of guipure embroidery and make some collars. If dubious about the shape, buy one already made and use it as a pattern. The sample costs 75 cents, but out of a yard of the material, which sells for 90

indelible ink and send in a neat paper box. Girls like bustles and nobody but a girl can estimate the comfort and durability of one of those wiry append-

ages, especially if it be homemade.

Cut the back piece the length desired and ruffle with the hair cloth, laying them in plaits or heavy gathers. Semi-nary chums knit black silk stockings, mittens and fascinators for each other, and nice exchanges they are, too. Gar-ters, however, will be the staple this year. Knee-bands are fashioned from plain silk elastic, fastened with gold clasps that are obtained at the large jewelry stores. When a brass or metallic buckle is used it is covered with a large rosette made of dozens and dozens of loops of narrow gross-grained rib-bon. The haberdashers of the city carry a large assortment of these seductive little zones and also supply circular boxes, which, when filled and covered with the glass lid, make a very natty

little poppy-show.

Apropos of the subject of these delicate gifts so dear to the feminine heart, it may be interesting to make mention of the fact that corsets which have been previously decorated with hand em-broidery will be extensively used for presents where the acquaintance is per-

A newly married lady would find a set of dinner mats as comely as they are useful. Crochet in circular or oval shapes with darning cotton, carrying as a stiffening a ball of hempen twine. It the time cannot be spent in the work, a very good substitute may be bought for 75 cents, which admits of hand painting or will gratify because of their

One who handles the pigments and brush dexterously will be able to de-light some dear one with a box of handpainted note paper, or a case of regret cards. A hundred calling cards, penned by a sister or friend, would be invoiced "priceless." Girls hate flowers for Christmas or wedding presents, and although one rarely hears about one girl giving another a flower offering, hanging baskets, ivies and pots of blooming plants often exchange hands. If a flowerng plant is decided upon keep the flowers back by pulling off the bads until nearly the time for presentation has arrived. For neck wear get from one to two-and-a-half yards of silk ribbon and after fringing out the ends paint a cluster of rose buds or some loose field flowers to reach not more than four inches high. While this is less trouble it is also less pretty than a tie made of piece goods cut on the bias, hemmed and finished at the ends with a piece of

oriental or invitation of Irish lace. Many ladies who have a large circle to go around and little time in which to manufacture their gifts, and what is most lamentable; less money with which to buy them, will be sorely perplexed in performing this mission of leve satis-factory to themselves. There are plenty of decorative novelifies that can be made out of fans, feathers, card-board and ribbons. Wreaths of evergreen detted with holly berries is one reserve. For perishable gitts select some pretty and withat inexpensive little baskets. that can be used after and for hairpins, matches or needlework. Buy loose candies, flowers, nuts and fruits, and fill them at home. Put a needlebook or pin case under the candy, and a tiny cut-glass bottle filled with persume or aromatic salts will enhance the fruit basket, which may be a beauty and cost less than 50 cents. Horse-shoes may be had for the asking, and it need not be the work of a genius to get a dime's worth of gilding-paint and 20 cents worth of ribbon, and assure the recipient that your love is hers. Then there are thimbles, by the score, sterling silver, for 50 and 75 cents each, and for a couple of dimes you can have the initials or pet name engraved on one of er corners. despair, get the rosy light hearted consin three yards of wide ribbon in olive, amber or crimson, to tie round her cloak collar, and she will glorify your name. A West Side beauty showed a trio of hat bands for as many brothers-in-law, and the window picture framed with love was all, she said, that sister could have. On one of her forest tramps she had stripped some white birehes of their inckets, and its value now is percepti-

On a square of black eard-board she had placed a couple of figures out out of the birch bark. The little girl has a lozenge on the end of her tongue, which provokes the lad at her side to

Maid of Athens, e're we part. Give, oh give me back my heart. The details of costume and landscape are touched up with paint, and as a whole, the composition is an interestng one.-Chicago Herald.

Christmas Cards. During the last few years art has en-tered into and associated itself in many ways with the common every-day life of the people, and it has richly improved the opportunities offered to it by the festival and holiday seasons. The good wishes and tender thoughts that were once embodied in tinsel valentines, confectionery mottoes, and cross-stitch are now expressed in dainty and artistic designs, bearing names well and widely known among art-workers. The Christ mas cards have called forth the best efforts, and for the last three years the prize cards have been eagerly looked for. Those of last year felt the influence of the passing craze for esthetic grouping and color, and their grotesque designs and dull, cold tints secured on-ly faint praise from a "Philistine" publie to whom Christmas-tide was associated with warmth and light and glowing holiday cheer. Seven designs re-ceved the eight prizes awarded for this year, Miss Dora Wheeler gaining both the first artists' and the first popular prize. The designs are more pleasing than those of last year, being warmer and brighter in color, and more sugges-tive of the sweet old Christmas story. Many of them have suffered in the reproduction, the printed copies losing much of the delicacy and sentiment of the originals. Miss Wheeler's design represents the Madonna, with the Child in her arms, in light, flowing draperies appearing against a disc of yellow light, to a mother who stands with her children under a leafless tree with their feet on the globe. The two sacred fig-ures are stiff and unpleasing, and there is a suggestion of Vedder in the wind-

earthly mother; but in the sweep of the line, and in the delicate gradations of color from low, cold tones to warm blending purple and rose, the work is sexquisite and embodies the pathos and joy of Christmas-tide. Miss L. B. Humphrey received the second artistic price for a design representing a child in her night-dress kneeling before a fireplace while she sends up the petition:

Good Saint Santa grant, I pray. To al a merry Christmas day. The indistinct form of the saint is seen in the border with his hand to his ear. The border of gold and greenish grays is very effective. Mr. Walter Satteriee received the second popular prize for a card showing a group of little street singers upon whom another group of merry children in a gayly lighted room are looking out. Above are seen a number of rosy cherub faces. The colors in this work are rich and warm. The third artists' prize was given to Miss Humphrey for a figure in Greek draperies standing in a crescent and sending forth a white dove, the whole set against a background of dark blue sky. The third popular prize was awarded to Frederick Dulman for a bright design showing children singing before a Christmas tree. Mr. Alfred Fredericks received the fourth artists' prize, his design representing a child sitting in bed with a profusion of toys about him. Though the color is rich. the golden border being especially good the central design resembles an adver-tising card. Miss Florence Maber's fourth popular prize card shows a lady and two children in early English cos-tumes with hands full of holly and mistletoe, walking in a snow-storm. This work is beautiful in color and has an ef-

The Holidays.

fective border of pale green scroll work on a silver ground.

Immediately after the holidays every woman, who has endeavored to present each of her intimate friends (and the number increases at this time somewhat after the manner of the modern Sundayschool) with a specimen of her hand work, resolves that she will begin next midsummer to prepare ber holiday gifts, so that, allowing for interruptions and delays, she may have them ready a few days earlier the next Christmas. This woman, wherever she may be, will per-haps be glad to be reminded gently of this resolve and to have a few suggestions given her in regard to some of the pretty things she can make without too great an outlay of time. A gift to baby, which the mother will appreciate, is one or more fancy bibs; a new and really striking way to make them is to em-broider little figures, after the Kate Greenaway style, on the front of the bib. Suppose the material to be fleecelined pique, which is both peetty and durable; bind the edge with a narrow bins band of white or color, or trim with Hamburg or torchon, or buttenhole it with working cotton; then trace some quaint figure on it, either in the center or at one side, and work it in outline stitch; the conbroldering may be done with marking cotton, or with soft, untion to try the silk in lukewarra water to make sure that it will not fade, and so love's labor be lost. Serviceable splashers to be put on the wall back of the washstand are made of linen momie cloth or common white linen or Java canvas Trim the edge with torchon and work in the outline stitch; a border and center piece, two figures like Jack and Jill, or old Mother Hubbard and her dog, are pretty. Hammock pillows are desirable. Make a cashion about half a yard square (or a triffe larger, according to your taste), cover with cretonne of some bright color, make a puff to go around the edge, so that the edges make a little ruffle for a heading. The under side of pillow does not need any trimmin the upper angle-may be ornamented in any way to suit your fancy. A simple and effective way is to put a handsome wide ribbon diagonally acress it, and at each side work some fancy stitches with silk, or you may work a border and put a monogram in the center. Table covers and searfs are as handsome and popular as ever. Elegant ones are made of as ever. Elegant ones are ma brocade velvet or plush, with borders of different colored silks, satins or plush. A beautiful scarf is made of cardinal plush, with a border of green plush, with blocks of tan-colored silk with pansies embroidered on them one pansy and two or three eveen leaves on each block. Less expensive but really handsome ones are made of doublefaced canton flannel, with a border of some richly colored and heavy nibbon; at one side applique work in the form of a bouquet, or some quaint figure may be put on; fringe is needed across the bottom. By exercising a little ingenuity an appearance of originality is given.

Echoes of the Angel Cong.

Since the birth of Christ not only have wars diminished, and animosities, social and national, on the whole large ly abated, but institutions to elevate. comfort and gladden all classes of society have sprung plentifully up. And: not only have the wealthy endowed these institutions, and the honored given them their patronage, but the very humblest have sometimes laid their foundations. The savings-bank—that happy device for increasing the means of these who can accumulate only by little and little, and so guard against an evil day -was originated by an obscure woman. The noble temperance reform owes its main efficacy to a lowly priest; the "Shelter for Foundlings," in Paris, was started by a plain sea-captain, and the "Benevolent Fund." of London, by a miniature-painter.

Study the history of the great public charities of Christendom, and you will find that they have flowed out of the spirit of that nativity chant. Indeed, once plant the stock of human brotherhood, and you are sure ultimately of every good moral fruit. What renders a community quiet, peaceful observers of law, and friends of good order? The Christian sentiment of good-will to all. This it is which makes happy homes; let it enter the hearts of father and let it enter the hearts of father and mother, parent and child, brother and sister, and they join in the angelic chorus. Filled with love, forbearing and forgiving one another, the light which fell once on the manger of Bethlehem falls on their roof, and, however lowly, it becomes divinely resplendent.—Artemus Bowers Muzzen.

Christmas Eve. God bless the little stockings All over the land to-night, Hung in the choicest corners, In the glow of crimson light!

The Mistletoe. When winter nights grow long, And winds without blow cold, We sit in a ring round the warm wood fire

And listen to stories old?
And we try to look grave as maids should be)
When the men bring in boughs of the laurel-tree.
Oh! the laurel, the evergreen tree!
The poets have laurels, and why not we?

-Barry Cornwall.

The Green Christmas Fallasy. An old proverb says that 'a green Christmas makes a fat churchyard," and inasmuch as the holidays are almost as green as a week in June, and as most people accept a proverb as if it were indisputably true, it should be said that there is no truth whatever in this particular saying. No warrant is found for it in statistics, and the very fact that people whose health is below the average are advised by physicians to seek a mild climate in winter should show others that when the Christmas holidays are mild and pleasant they should not be oppressed with any unusual dread of impending death. The truth probably is that if now should meet with a cold snap the mortality rate for the contract of the contract for the month would at once rise. It is much and more likely that old ladies who dwell in a world of proverbs will come to grief than that undertakers will have any special reason to rejoice.

Token of Regard.

We believe in presents of all sorts— Christmas boxes. New Years's gifts, birthday presents, especially for children and young people. Make them rejoice because they were born, and rejoice with them. It is well for children
not only to receive presents but to make
them. Gifts need not be costly to be very precious, and if they are chosen with reference to the tastes or needs of the recipient they have a double value. An excellent present for a child is a microscope, a cabinet of minerals, a historical chart, a writing-desk, a tool-chest, a work-box. Any one of these gifts will be of lasting utility, some of them cambe so shared with others that n whole family will be kenefited by them, as the chart, the cabinet, the mineralogical cabinets can be bought for a small sum, microscopes are for sale at every price and ass of great value to young students.

An Architect. The late Mr. Alexander, Meeminent architect, was under cross-examination at Maidstone, by Sergeant, Aterward Baron, Garrow, who wished to detract from the weight of his testimony, and, after asking him what was his name, proceeded: "You are a builder, I believe?" "No, sir, I am not a builder, I be-lieve?" "No, sir, I am not a builder; I am an architect." "They are much the same, I suppose?" "I beg your perdon, sir, I can not admit that; I consider them to be totally different." "Oh, indeed! perhaps you will state wiserein this great difference exists?" "An architect, sir," replied Mr. Alexander, "conceives the design, prepares the plan, draws out the specifications—in abort, supplies the mind; the builder is merely the bricklesser or the conventor. The bricklayer or the carpenter. The builder, in fact, is the machine; the architect the power that puts the ma-chine together and sets it going," "Oh, very well Mr. Architect, that will do. And now, after your very ingenious distinction without a difference, per-haps you can inform the court who was the architect of the tower of Babel?" The reply, for promptness and wit, is not to be rivaled in the whole history of rejoinder. "There was no architect, sir, and hence the confusion.

A Timery Wift. Books will never lose their value as gifts suitable to all occasions. In select ng one, however, it is clearly happiest to select one that the receiver will be sure to read. Hence the impropriety of sending a Hebrew bible to little Jack Horner, who prefers plums to roots. There is no trouble in fixing upon the right kind of a book for the man or woman whose mind you know. Between friends worthy of the name there can hardly be a mistake. You may go to your shelves in preference to going to your bookseller, and taking down some volume which both of you have admired, you write your friend's name upon your own book plate, and the matter is settled at once. You are sure to confer pleasure upon the person whose taste you have so gracefully consulted. If we give a book to one who leves us or who is leved by us, it will convey a charm quite independent of its contents. It is as if we made offering of an oppinion which, though not accepted, secures hospitable entertainment because it is ours. It is like bestowing a morsel of ourselves; and we know it will whisper to the render something of our own tone and ageent. So we may sing with the poem, speculate with the phil-esophy, narrate the history, and gossipbiographies and annals. So, long after we have departed, the friendly hand may take down the votive volume; and as the eye runs the following pages, and catches a familiar sentence and there the penciled marginalia, how can the old happy evenings be forgotten or we forgotten with them?

Price Reduced.

Anticipating the removal of the Stamp Tax at no distant day, the Magnetic Medicine Co., of Detroit, as will be seen by their new advertisement that appears in to-day's paper, have reduced the price of their medicine from one dollar per package to fifty cents, and when twelve packages are ordered at one time, and five dollars paid for the same, they issue a written guarantee agreeing to refund the money if the full course of treatment fails to effect a cure. We have no doubt the Magnetic Medicine will have a large sale in every section of the country, as few medicines are sold at as low a price, and what is especially in its favor is the guarantee of its effecting a cure. The medicine is sold at all Drug Stores, everywhere. Guarantees are issued in Owosso and county by all druggists.

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